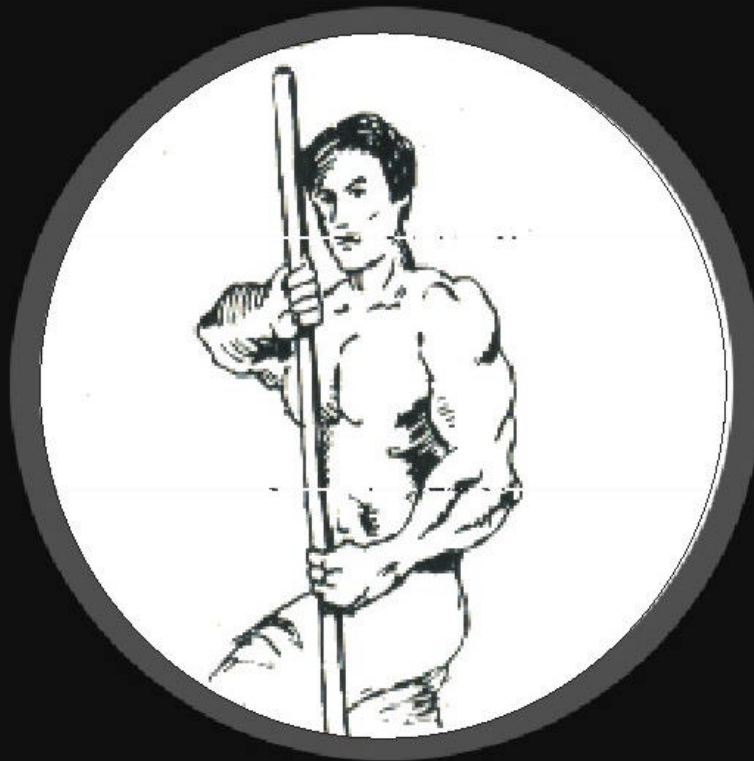




**MARTIAL ARTS  
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Mastering the bo

# Mastering the BO



**Dr. Ted Gambordella**

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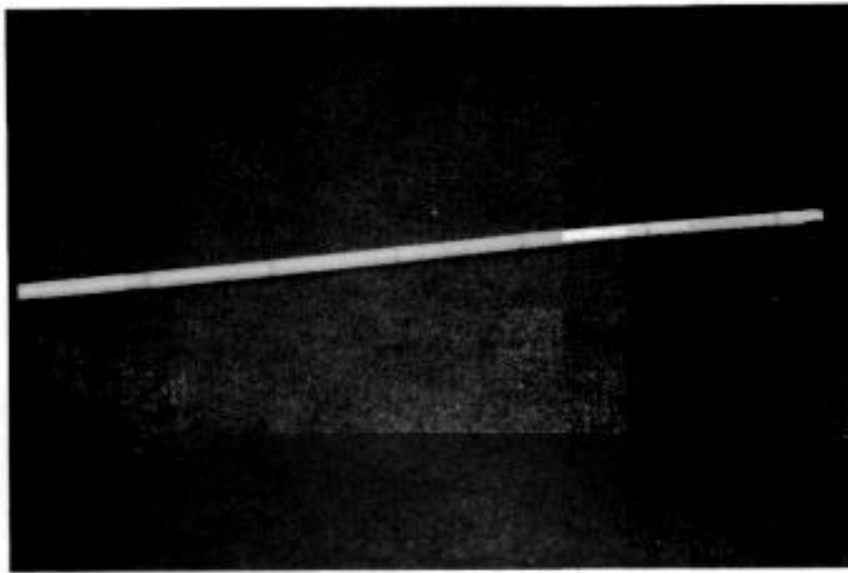
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## Mastering the bo

### The Bo

The bo is an excellent weapon but one of the more impractical ones because of its size. It is a piece of hard wood about six feet in length, and therefore cannot be easily concealed or carried in a car or on your person. Still, it has remained a favorite karate weapon for years because of its versatility and beauty when used in the hands of a master.

Because of its length, the bo is often used to block nunchaku, or knives or other weapons, and techniques of the bo are used today by most military forces when they teach rifle or punja stick fighting. The original bo was used for a walking stick and for a prod for cattle or goats but became a weapon in the hands of the skilled martial artist.





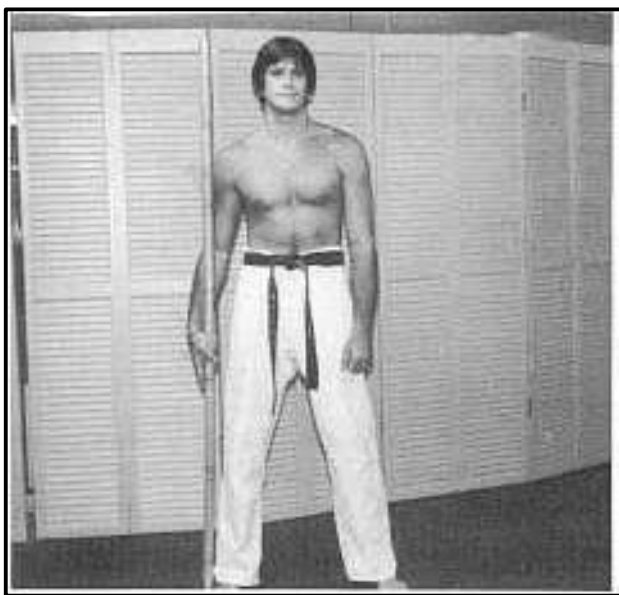
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### HOLDING THE BO

There are several different methods of holding the bo, but the most common one used for defense is the stance with the bo held in the hand by the side.

**Steps:** stand with the feet shoulder-width apart, with the bo held in the right hand and going down the side of the right leg. The hand should be placed around the bo, with the palm facing away from the body.



Close-up of the position of the hand holding the bo. The fingers are wrapped around the bo, and the forefinger is extended slightly downward. The thumb is securely wrapped around, and the bo rests against the leg.



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**Side view of the holding stance. Note that the hand is wrapped around the bo with the fingers pointing down and the thumb wrapped around the front.**



**The ready position: this is the stance used for most strikes with the bo. The left hand comes across the chest and wraps around the bo with the palm facing away from the body. The right hand is in the position we have already seen.**





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### **Blocks**

**The two-handed groin block: used for strong kicks. Step forward with either leg, and thrust the bo down squarely in front of the groin.**



**The low block: snap the bo downward and to the side in front of the legs and groin area.**







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**The middle block with two hands: swing the bo across the chest and snap it in front of the body to block punches and kicks.**



**Rising block with two hands: snap up the bo directly in front of the head.**





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**The two-hand extended groin block: used to strike and block kicks from a greater distance.**



**Thrusting the bo across the body for a strike: stand in a side stance with the bo equally in front of you.**





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**Now step to the side and thrust both arms across the body, snapping the bo out to the side.**



**Close-up of the hand position in the side thrust.**







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### **STRIKES**

**Front view.**

**The overhead strike: stand with the bo in the ready position. The right hand holds the bo low, and the left hand is across the body.**



**Flip the right hand and up toward the front in a circle while pulling across and down with the left hand.**



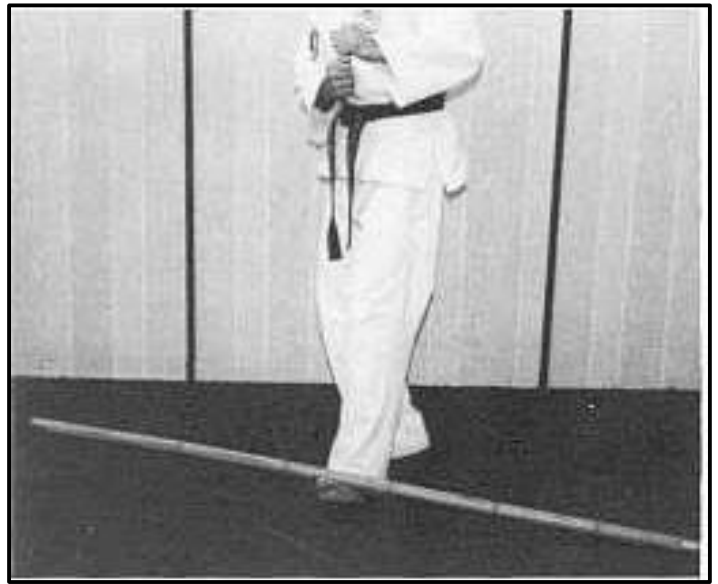
**Snap the bo straight out and lock it under the arm of the left hand.**



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**Picking the bo** up off the floor without using your hands: if you should find yourself in the position of having a bo on the ground and still having to defend yourself, and you cannot bend over to get it, you can pick it up with your feet. Roll the bottom of the foot on top of the bo while keeping up your guard.



Now quickly, but smoothly, roll the foot back, and the bo will roll up on top of your foot. Now lift the knee straight up, and the bo will fly up into the air. You can catch it with your left hand. It takes practice, and you must be sure to pick the bo up as near the center as possible lest it fly up crooked.





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**TECHNIQUES USING BO**  
Prepare for attack holding bo down the right side.



As he punches, swing the bo out and into his ribs.





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**Now flip the bo around and smash his other side. This will knock him down.**



**Finish him with a smash to the face and throat.**





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### Technique 2

**Ready for the attack.**



**Now quickly come up and smash the side of his face. As he punches, thrust the bo out and into his abdomen.**







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**Follow with a smash to the other side and finish him off.**



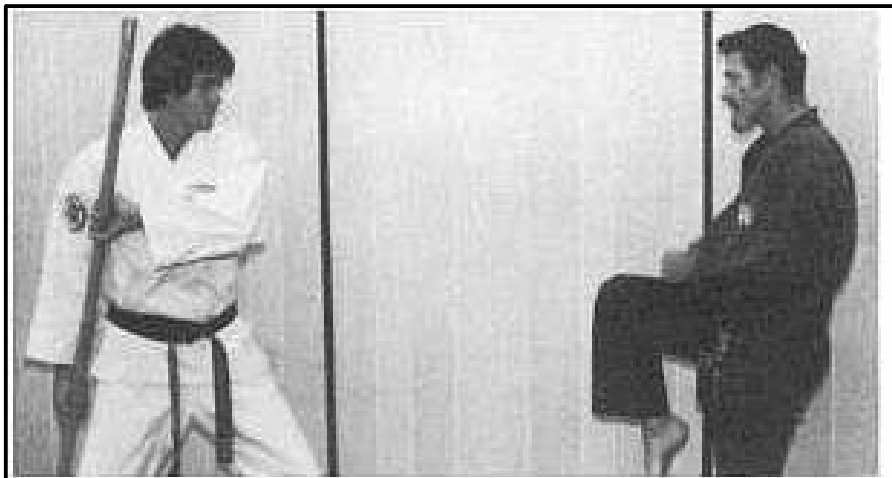


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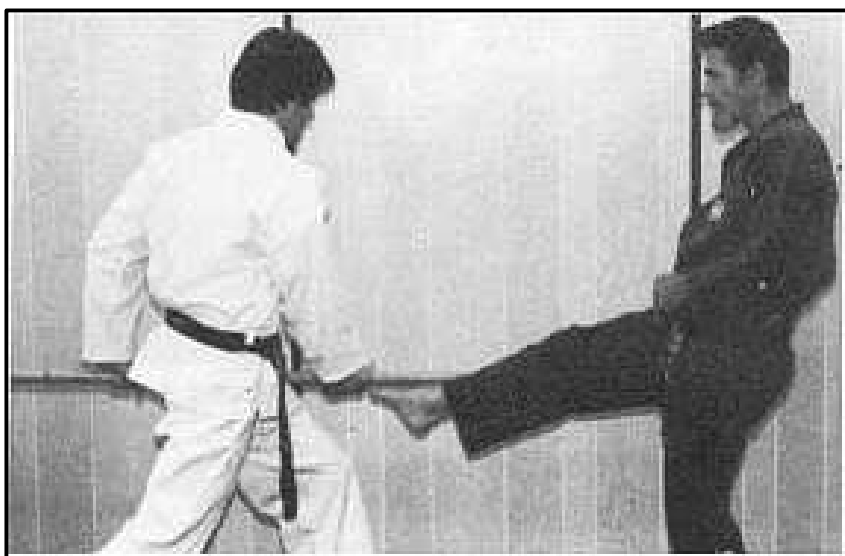
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### **Technique 3**

**Ready to block a kick.**



**Block the snap kick by swinging the bo down- ward  
across the foot.**





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**Now flip the bo into the groin and then up into the neck.**

**Finish with a smash to the neck and shoulder.**





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### **Technique 4**

**Block the snap kick with a two-handed groin block.**



**Continue to go around. This will lock the leg so that you can throw him to the ground.**



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**Take the left hand off and flip the bo with the right hand under the leg.**



**On the ground, break his leg by holding his foot and applying pressure with the bo.**







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**Mastering the bo**  
**Using the Bo for Defense Against Other Weapons**

**Against an attack with the tonfa: ready for the attack.**



**Block the strike with the left tonfa by striking the bo against his arm.**





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**Now block his left and then follow with a flip of the bow across the back of his neck to finish him.**





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## **Mastering the bo AGAINST THE SAI**

**Block the right sai by swinging the bo across the body.**



**Block the left sai by swinging the bo back to the left.**





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**Counter by striking the side of his head.**



**Finish by smashing his face with a left-hand swing.**

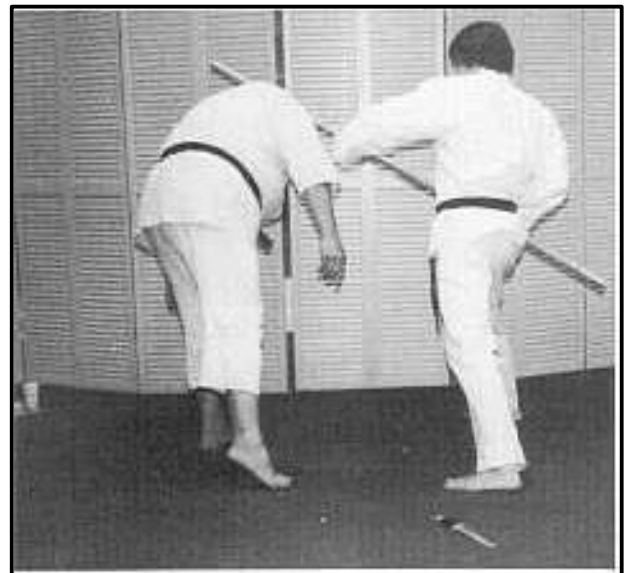




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## **Mastering the bo Against the Knife**

**Ready to block the knife. Block his thrust by swinging the bo downward across his knife arm.**



**Counter and finish him by smashing upward with the bo into the side of his face.**





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**Ready to block the knife. Block using a rising block**



**Counter with a right and left to the side of his head.  
Finish him with a smash on the back of his neck.**



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### Against the Jo or Baton

**Ready to block the baton,**



**Swing the bo across the body and contact the baton to stop it.**

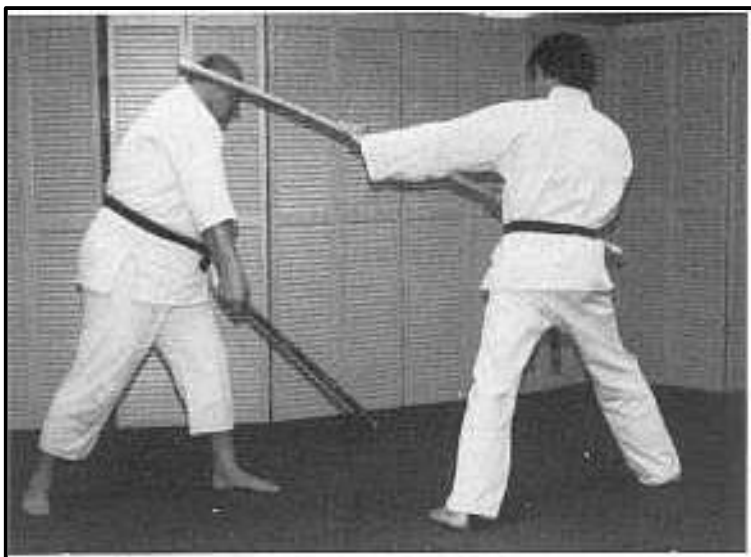




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## Mastering the bo

**Counter with a smash to the side of the head.**



**Finish with a smash the back of the head.**





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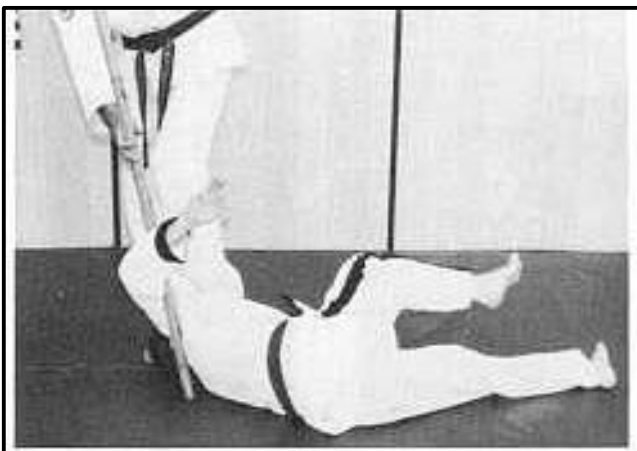
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### Throws:

**Lock the bo into the arm and step around to the side.**



**Now throw him by swinging the bo up over his head and then in a large circle to the ground. This can also be used to break or dislocate his shoulder if done with speed and snapping action.**





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## **Mastering the bo DEFENSE AGAINST BO**

**You are held from behind in a choke. Tighten the neck muscles very hard to stop the choke. Reach up to relieve the pressure and grab the bo with both hands.**



**Hold very tight and bend your knees and lift. This will throw him over your back to the ground. On the ground, you will find you have the bo. Use it to smash his groin.**





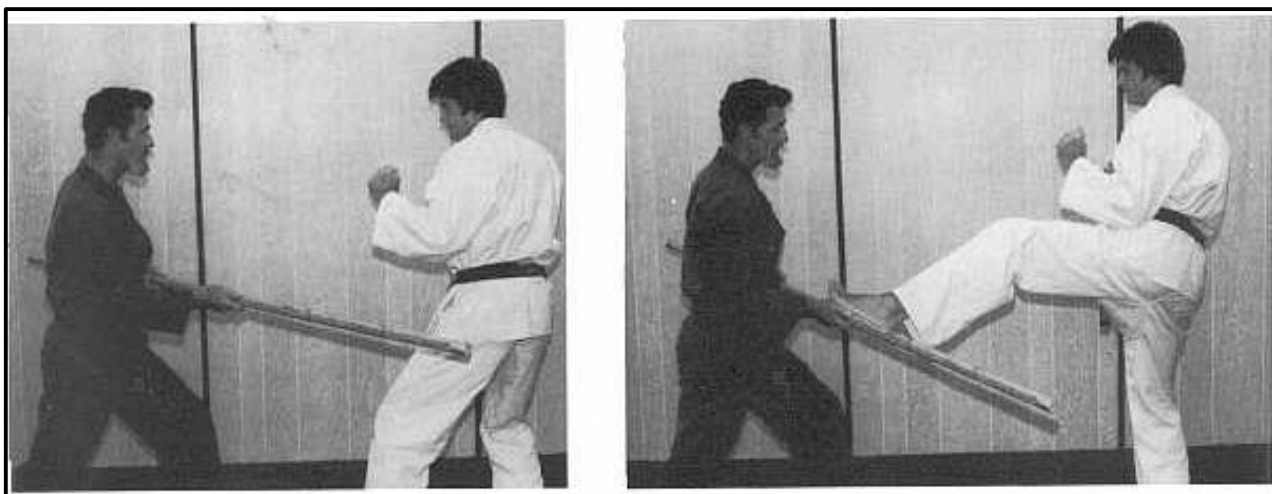


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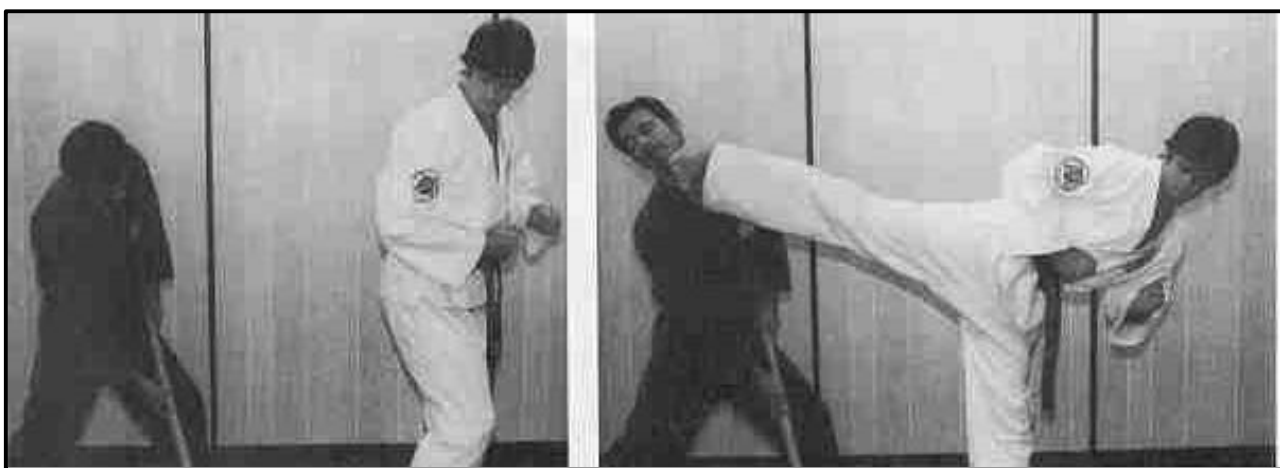
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### Blocking the Bo with a Kicking Attack

**As the attacker swings at you, get ready to kick the bo.**



**Quickly swing up the left leg and contact the bo and his right hand with the ball of your foot -**

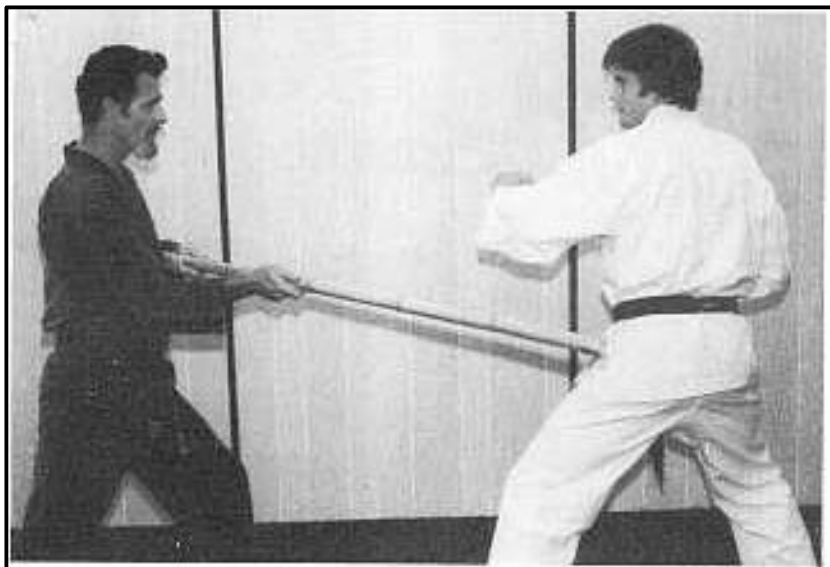




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**An attacker swings the bo at your side.**



**Swing your body around in a circle to the left and grab the bo with both hands. You must move very fast, but you can do it.**





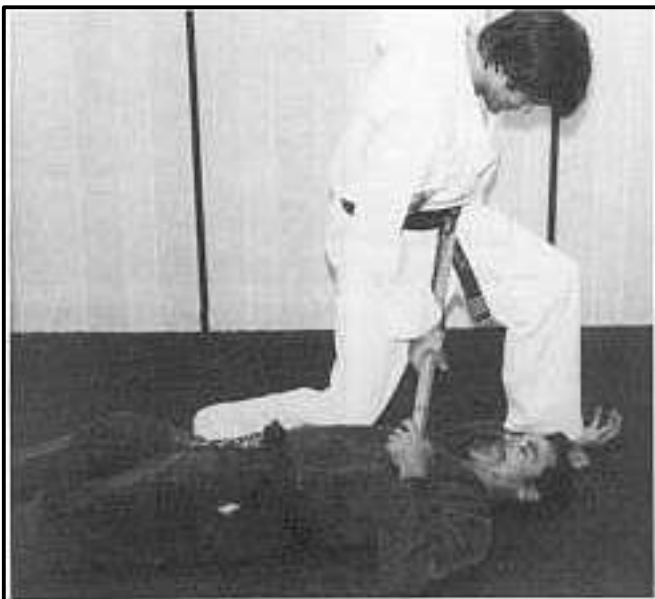
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**Now grab his shoulder and lift with your right leg and throw him to the ground.**



**On the ground, crush his chest with your knee and strike his throat with a shuto.**





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## Mastering the bo **FLYING KICK DEFENSES**

### **The jumping sidekick**





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## **The Jumping Double Front Kick**







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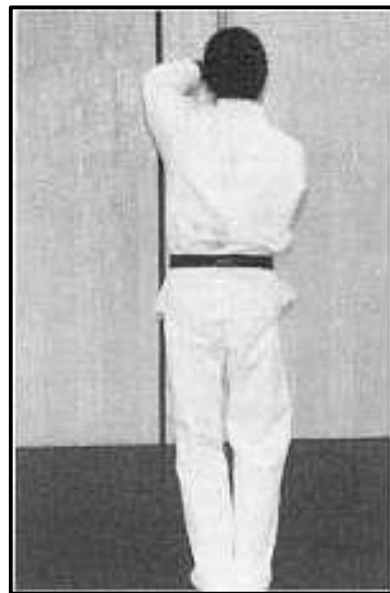
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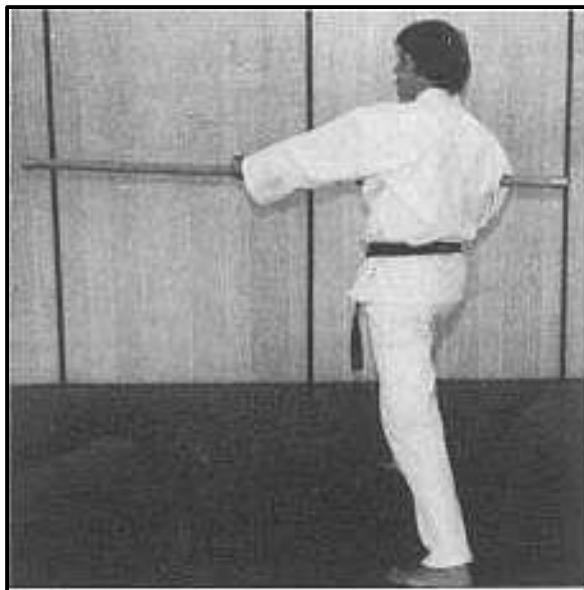
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